



Holy Spirit
CATHOLIC CHURCH

1100 North Sara Road
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**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
MINISTRY GUIDE
2017-2018 SCHOOL YEAR**

**PARISH RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
MISSION STATEMENT**

**The mission of the Religious Education Program is to provide quality,
faith-filled educational opportunities to meet the spiritual and
educational development of the entire parish.**

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION FOR OUR YOUTH

The children of our parish need an environment in which to develop and experience our Catholic faith. Parents provide the first and best environment for spiritual growth. We, the Pastor, Director of Religious Education (DRE), and catechists, provide an environment that supports your efforts at home. The catechists, along with their assistants, volunteer their time and talent to teach our children about their faith. They spend considerable time developing their lesson plans and plan activities supporting our Church's efforts in developing our children as followers of the Gospel Life taught to us by Jesus.

We are especially aware of our responsibilities to protect and guard the children placed in our care. We closely follow the mandates from the Archbishop of Oklahoma City concerning our parish providing a safe environment for our children. It is imperative both parents and children make the Pastor and Directors of Religious Education aware of any violations concerning the safe environment mandates placed on our catechists, assistants, and other volunteers involved in the youth program. Our annual Safe Environment training mandated by the Archbishop for our children will be conducted by our catechists on Sunday, November 12th. If a parent/guardian does not desire for the child to attend the training, he/she should notify the child's catechist or the DRE as soon as possible.

REGISTRATION

Each family must be registered in the parish prior to registering their child(ren) in the parish religious education program. Each child attending religious education classes must be registered. Registration is normally conducted prior to the end of the previous academic school year and directly before the start of the current school year. The DRE will ensure that each parent/guardian of a child previously registered is contacted to ensure all pertinent data on the registration form is updated. New parishioners are expected to contact the DRE as soon as possible to register their children. Part of the registration form is an emergency contact telephone number. This telephone number will only be used when it is essential to immediately contact the parent/guardian.

TUITION

At the present time, there is a tuition cost for attending religious education of \$20 per student or \$50 per family of 3 or more. The tuition is to help with purchases of educational materials and to provide general supplies. Special activities outside the academic classroom will normally require a nominal fee.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION CURRICULUM

The parish religious education program currently uses the Loyola Press' series, *Christ Our Life*, for grades 1, 3-8; the RCL Benziger's, *Reconciliation Pardon and Peace* and *Eucharist We Give Thanks and Praise*, for 2nd grade; and RCL Benziger's *Stories of God's Love* for Kindergarten. Unless there is a bilingual catechist available, all class sessions are conducted in English.

CLASS SCHEDULES

During the first class session in September, all parents will receive an academic class schedule for the current catechetical year. Sunday class sessions for grades K-5 from 9:05 A.M to 10:05 AM. Sunday class sessions for grades 6-12 and for Special Sacraments will be held from 7:00 P.M. to 8:15 P.M. It is imperative that parents ensure that their children arrive on time to take advantage of the full session. Parents shall not drop off their children earlier than 15 minutes prior to the beginning of any session or activity. Parents shall also ensure that at least two catechists are present to guarantee that the Archdiocesan safe environment guidelines are met. It is required that parents accompany their children to and from the classroom to become more acquainted with their child (ren)'s catechist(s) and for the safety and protection of their children.

If a child is not picked up within 15 minutes after the end of a class/activity session, the parent/guardian will be contacted utilizing the emergency telephone number listed on the registration form. If more than 30 minutes' elapses after efforts have been made to contact parent by the DRE or Pastor, the Mustang police and Oklahoma Department of Human Services will be contacted. It is essential that a parent contact the DRE if they know they cannot pick up their child in a timely manner.

Regular attendance at catechetical sessions is extremely important. If it is necessary for a child to miss or be late for a session, it is imperative that the parent/guardian contact the Religious Education (RE) Office as soon as possible before the class or session. The DRE is to be contacted in person or a message left on the Religious Education office telephone answering machine. The phone number is **376-5633**. If no one answers, please leave a message on the recorder. The child's catechist will be notified and materials will be made available for the parent/guardian to cover the missed session. If two or more sessions are missed, the DRE will contact the parent/guardian to determine if there is a problem that can be resolved at the parish level.

CLASS CANCELLATION

There may be occasions during the academic school year when inclement weather dictates that classes be cancelled. The decision to cancel a class session will be made by the Pastor and DRE. Notification will be made through the four major television stations in the Oklahoma City area (KFOR Channel 4, KOCO Channel 5, KWTW Channel 9, and KOKH Channel 25). In addition, to being posted on the major television networks a *Flocknote* will be sent out via text message.

SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION

Preparation for the sacrament of Confirmation is conducted on a two-year cycle in accordance with the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City guidelines. *Confirmation candidates are expected to attend all religious education classes throughout the religious education year.* The candidate's parent/guardian is expected to phone the Religious Education office to notify the Confirmation Coordinator, as soon as possible, if the candidate will miss a religious education session. Any and all absences must be an excused absence (Homework is not an excused absence.) Three unexcused absences during the two-year confirmation formation will render the candidate ineligible to receive the sacrament. *Candidates will be expected to participate in Mass every week, all special confirmation sessions, 20 hrs of service projects, two retreats per year for all high school students and be active members in the parish.*

ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Adult Faith Formation classes will be conducted once a semester. Dates for classes will be announced at the beginning of each semester. All parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to participate. Adult Faith Formation classes are to further the identity of parents as active members of the domestic Church. All Religious Education classes are supplemental to the foundational catechesis that should be taking place at home under the guidance of a child's parent(s)/guardian(s). Therefore, to aide in the propagation of the faith at home, Adult Faith Formation classes seek to teach parent(s)/guardian(s) how to pray.

Adult Faith Formation classes will be centered on a proper understanding and active participation in the use of sacramentals, such as the Rosary, and in reflection of the Good News, by way of lectio divina. These classes, in addition to being aides for parent(s)/guardian(s) to be the primary facilitators of the faith at home, are to help parent(s)/guardian(s) to a better understanding of their faith and to live out the words of our Lord in their daily lives. Adult Faith Formation classes seek to enliven in the mind, hearts, and spirits of parent(s)/guardian(s) to strengthen their relationship with the Lord Jesus and deepen their faith.

SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

Throughout the academic year special activities may be planned for a class or the entire religious education program. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to allow their children to participate in these activities. The activities may be at the Church or at other locations. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified well in advance of the activity in order to plan for their child's participation.

As Catholics we need to share in each other's journey of faith. All of the special activities are designed to allow children to grow in their own faith journeys. Allowing your child(ren) to participate in the special activities helps to develop a sense of Christian fellowship and to share in the faith journey of other youth participants.

All field trips must receive the permission of the Pastor and DRE. Before a field trip may be conducted, the required consent forms for the children, volunteer chaperones, drivers, and non-parish members must be completed and submitted to the DRE for approval. Only Safe Environment trained individuals may be approved to accompany the children. This is for the safety of the children and to meet the Archdiocesan guidelines. The required forms are available from the DRE.

CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR/ CODE OF CONDUCT

Respect, cooperation, and participation are an essential part of all parish classes and activities. We are all part of God's family, and behavior is a reflection of this belonging. Behaviors which reflect respect for all participants and catechists include:

- LISTEN - do not interrupt whomever is talking,
- PARTICIPATION - in discussion with respect for others,
- BE COURTEOUS - with words, gestures, hands and feet,
- WALK - while moving about the classroom and parish facilities, and
- BRING - only those items needed for religious education class.

Each child is expected to act in a Christian manner during all classes and outside activities. Children who become disrespectful of other children, catechists, or parish property will be directed to the DRE. The DRE shall try to correct the behavior. If this does not correct the problem, the DRE will direct the child to the Pastor. Regardless, if the child is directed to the DRE or Pastor, the child's parent(s)/guardian(s) shall be contacted as soon as possible and made aware of the situation.

Public Demonstration of Affection (PDA) will not be tolerated at anytime while participating in our RE program and/or parish youth activities. Any youth involved in PDA activity shall be

suspended from the religious education program and will not be readmitted until a meeting is held with the youth's parents, the youth, the Pastor, and the Youth Ministry Coordinator.

Cell phones and electronic devices shall be turned off prior to the beginning of the academic catechetical session. Students shall not be allowed to use or play with their cell phones or electronic devices during the academic session. If a student is required to make a phone call, he/she will be required to receive permission from the catechist and make their call from the Religious Education office.

PARISH FACILITIES SECURITY

Anytime there are children present, everyone involved with the religious education program must stay alert to strange individuals approaching the buildings or children. If any suspicion about an individual or individual activity causes alarm, the DRE must be contacted immediately. The DRE shall, if necessary, secure all children in their classrooms and the outside doors are to be locked. The DRE shall contact the Mustang police department as soon as possible to report the individual/activity. The children shall remain in their classrooms until the DRE determine it is safe, and there is no other threat.

Safety drills will be conducted one or more times each academic year. The drills will ensure that the students know how to properly take shelter or exit the classrooms in case of an emergency.

MEDICATIONS

During weekly sessions, the DRE, catechists, or assistants WILL NOT supervise the taking of prescription medications, nor will they administer them. If absolutely necessary, a parent must come to the classroom and dispense any prescription medication to their child. The DRE, catechists, or assistants may supervise the taking of non-prescriptive drugs if authorized on the medical consent form completed at the time of registration.

POLICY ADDITIONS

Any and all policies developed or revised by the parish Religious Education Department are subject to the approval of the Parish Pastoral Council and Pastor. Archdiocesan Department of Education policies will be added in strategic places or as an Appendix to this Religious Education/Youth Ministry Guide. Questions concerning any polices set in this guide should be directed to the DRE in person or call **376-5633**. The Pastor is the final approving authority for this document.